

# SOUTHEND HIGH SCHOOL FOR BOYS

## ACADEMY GRAMMAR SCHOOL

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Headteacher: Robin M Bevan MA MEd PhD FRSA



24<sup>th</sup> January, 2023

Dear Parent

### Mock examinations

The new term has started with very considerable success and evidence of genuine resilience and determination amongst our pupils. Congratulations, especially, to the Year 13 students who have already completed their mock assessments with their minds keenly attuned to reaching their full potential when the Summer A-level examination season begins.

Year 12 and Year 11 are anticipating the opportunity to demonstrate their best in forthcoming mocks and to put into practice the skills associated with effective revision and study habits that foster long-term retention of knowledge, skills and understanding. We wish them well.

### Social Media

Parents are reminded that the school uses social media channels to provide simple celebration and publicity arising from significant events, successes and activities. The social media feeds are a selective snapshot of all that we do: please be assured that all pupil accomplishments are appropriately celebrated in the classroom, year assemblies, House assemblies, or in front of the whole school.

Forthcoming posts will provide brief details and images from: our recent national short story prize winners; an exhibition staged to mark Holocaust Memorial Day; the annual House music competition; and the school athletics team's confirmed place, representing England at the World School Athletics championships in Turkey later this Summer ([ISF World School Athletics Championship 2023](https://www.worldschoolathletics.com/)).

### Sponsorship Opportunity: World School Athletics

The cost of taking a team of six athletes (the individuals will be chosen nearer the time) and staff to Trabzon, Turkey, for the World School finals is significant. We have sourced support already through a number of channels. However, we are still looking to secure a total of £4000 in sponsorship donation: individual donors may choose to remain anonymous or be identified; company sponsors have the opportunity to see their name on the team kit (which will feature in school communications, local press photographs and national school sports press coverage). If you are able to offer assistance, please email [enquiries@shsb.org.uk](mailto:enquiries@shsb.org.uk) with the level of commitment you are able to make.

### Dates for the diary

Please make a note for your diary of the forthcoming production performances of **A Midsummer Night's Dream**: Thursday 9<sup>th</sup> and Friday 10<sup>th</sup> March. A strictly limited number of tickets will be available, not yet released, for these dates.

**The Spring Concert** – one night only: Wednesday 29 March – will almost certainly sell out. Tickets will be released nearer the time, but once again, please make a note in your diary.



### **Parents Evenings: online format**

Following the successful introduction of online Parents Evenings during the pandemic, the school consulted parents on their preferred model of engagement for these progress meetings between teachers, pupils and parents. The overwhelming majority of parents preferred the online format, which – given our very disparate catchment area – is, perhaps, not surprising. We do recognise that it is not everyone's preferred format, but we have seen a very significant increase in the level of engagement and attendance as a result.

The format is relatively simple. First, teachers make appointments for those parents with whom they would most like to speak. This is often to facilitate the exchange of advice where a pupil might have the potential to do even better, but it can also allow opportunities for teachers to provide encouragement or praise in circumstances of emergent potential or real progress and achievement. Parents are then able to add additional appointments to the schedule, once the online link is provided to them. In Years 7-11, *please understand that you will not be able to meet and talk with all your son's teachers*. Although some colleagues have sufficient timed slots, many teachers have more than one class in a year group, which limits what is possible. It may be helpful to understand that this year, more than a quarter of our teaching staff have over 250 separate pupils whom they teach, spread across the year groups; whilst five have more than 400!

Parents will, of course, get written feedback in the Annual Report issued during the year and have access to current grades through the Go4Schools platform. In Years 7-11, as a general rule, we do not expect teachers to provide written feedback as a substitute for, or in addition to, feedback given at the Parents Evenings. Appointments at Parents Evening allow parents to obtain a balanced picture of their son's progress; it is not meant to be a detailed report from every one of their subject teachers.

Despite having Parents Evenings online, we do look for opportunities to bring parents on site and there is a developing programme of workshops, which will support all parents in helping and guiding their sons/daughters. Please keep an eye out for invitation letters.

Finally, if at any time a parent has an unresolved concern related to our provision or an issue that may need addressing, please email with a clear statement of the matter, your child's name and year group, so that it can be directed to the relevant member of staff. Thank you.

### **Industrial Action – proposed first 'strike' day – Wednesday 1<sup>st</sup> February**

The national and local press have provided significant coverage of the national ongoing pay dispute between teachers, through the recognised Trade Unions, and the Government. At the time of writing, a resolution does not seem to be forthcoming: we can all hope one will emerge. The National Education Union, which represents a high proportion of the teaching staff at this school, has proposed a day of 'strike action' on Wednesday 1<sup>st</sup> February. As Headteacher, I am working with staff representatives to confirm the likely scale of action and to determine any revised arrangements that may prove necessary. I will be writing to all parents with relevant details, in a separate letter, as soon as the implications are fully clear.

Yours sincerely



Robin M. Bevan  
Headteacher